

Penn. Div. Whitman 386

MISSIONARY HEROES COURSE

LIFE STORIES OF GREAT MISSIONARIES FOR
TEEN AGE BOYS

ARRANGED IN PROGRAMS

Marcus Whitman

Hero of the Oregon Country

SOURCE BOOK

“WINNING THE OREGON COUNTRY”

By JOHN T. FARIS

Program Prepared by
FLOYD L. CARR

BAPTIST BOARD OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF MISSIONARY EDUCATION
276 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

Course No. 1

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Program based upon WINNING THE OREGON COUNTRY

by JOHN T. FARIS

The Westminster Press, \$1.00

FOREWORD

THE *Missionary Heroes Course* for Boys meets a real need. It is a series of missionary programs for boys based on great biographies which every boy should know. Course Number One, now available, provides programs for the ensuing twelve months and may be used in the monthly meetings of boys' groups. Other courses are in preparation and will be issued for subsequent years.

It is suggested that the leader purchase three copies of each leaflet; one to be kept for reference and the other two to be cut up to provide each boy with his assigned part. In order to tie together the life incidents as they are presented by the boys, the leader should master the facts outlined in the biographical sketch and read carefully the volume upon which the program is based. These volumes are missionary classics and may be made the basis of a worth-while library of Christian adventure.

Boys are keenly interested in stories of adventure and achievement and it is hoped that participation in the programs will lead many of the lads to read these great missionary biographies. Attention is called to the eleven other life-story programs in the series now available for Course Number One, and to the series now in preparation for the ensuing year, both of which are listed on the last page. The books upon which these programs are based can be ordered from the nearest literature headquarters. Portraits of these missionary heroes will also be made available for purchase.

While these programs have been developed to meet the needs of boys' organizations of all types—*i.e.*, Organized Classes, Boy Scouts, Knights of King Arthur, Kappa Sigma Pi, etc.—they were especially prepared for the chapters of the *Royal Ambassadors*, a missionary organization for teen age boys, originating in the southland and recently adapted to the needs of the Northern Baptist Convention by the Department of Missionary Education. We commend these materials to all lovers of boys.

WILLIAM A. HILL.

PROGRAM FOR MEETING

1. Scripture Reading: Isaiah 35:8-10, 40:3-5: This prophetic picture of "The King's Highway" applies with especial significance to the pioneer leadership of Marcus Whitman.
2. Prayer.
3. Hymn: "My Country 'Tis of Thee." Our national hymn may fittingly be used by reason of the patriotic loyalty of Marcus Whitman in his determination to hold Oregon for the Union.
4. Introduction to the Life Story* (based upon pages 1-68 of "Winning the Oregon Country" by John T. Faris.)
5. Whitman Wins a Wife and Co-Workers (page 69-72).
6. The Old Historic Wagon (pages 75-78).
7. A Notable Celebration of the Fourth of July (pages 79-81).
8. A Cheering Welcome (pages 83-85).
9. Choosing Fields of Labor (pages 85-87).
10. Laying Foundations (pages 112-114, 116).
11. Whitman Hears the Call of Duty (pages 174-176).
12. Starting on the Historic Ride (pages 176-178).
13. Crossing the Rio Grande (pages 179-180).
14. Marcus Whitman at Washington (pages 182-183).
15. Leading New Settlers to Oregon (pages 183-184).
16. Crossing the Snake River (pages 184-186).
17. The Massacre by the Cayuse Indians (pages 196-199).

* The leader should read both the brief sketch in this leaflet, the "Story of Marcus Whitman," by J. G. Craighead, Westminster Press, \$1.25, and "Winning the Oregon Country," by John T. Faris, in order, as the program progresses, to fill in the gaps between the assignments.

SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF MARCUS WHITMAN

MARCUS WHITMAN was born at Rushville, now Gorhem, N. Y., September 4, 1802. His parents were devout Christians and from them he caught the spiritual impulse. He studied medicine at the Berkshire Medical College and at the age of thirty-three responded to the call of the American Board of Commissioners for leaders for the far west.

He left home in February, 1835, with Rev. Samuel Parker on an exploring tour, passing through St. Louis and finally crossing the Rocky Mountains. It was decided that Parker should continue and that he should return for reinforcements. By November he had reached his home in western New York and early the next spring he set forth in a covered wagon accompanied by his wife, Narcissa Prentiss and Dr. and Mrs. Henry H. Spalding.

On July 4, 1836, the party passed the crest of the Rockies and pausing at the place termed *Pacific Spring*, so named because the waters flowed westward to the Pacific, they unfurled the Stars and Stripes to the breeze and knelt in solemn prayer. Thus these sturdy pioneers dedicated the Oregon Country to God and claimed it for America.

Delayed again and again by the heavy wagon, yet impressed by its strategic importance in relation to the future settlement of the Oregon Country, they slowly made their way westward. Fort Hall and the Snake River seemed impassable barriers, but each in turn was passed. When they arrived at Fort Boise, Idaho, they left the wagon there until the next spring.

On September 1, 1836, they reached Fort Walla Walla and received a royal welcome. The Nez Percés Indians, whose deputation to St. Louis in October 1832 had been the means of enlisting these brave pioneers, also gave them a hearty welcome. Eleven days later they arrived at Fort Vancouver, the headquarters of the Hudson Bay Company, where they took counsel and secured provisions. Henry Spalding settled at Lapwai on the Clearwater River among the Nez

Percés and Marcus Whitman at Wai-i-lat-pu on the Walla Walla River, among the Cayuse Indians.

At Wai-i-lat-pu, "the place of the rye grass," the Cayuse Indians had set apart 640 acres of their land, enclosed by two branches of the Walla Walla River. Here, Whitman, with the help of his teamsters, erected a comfortable house. On December 10, Mrs. Whitman arrived from Vancouver and in a short time had opened a school for the children, in addition to her household duties. The Doctor gave the Indians an example in industry, cultivating his land, and erecting a grist mill in addition to his medical ministry.

On October 3, 1842, Whitman started on his historic ride to save Oregon to the Union. The Hudson Bay Company had encouraged Canadian immigration with the view to claiming possession through the preponderance of Canadian settlers. The hour had come to persuade Congress to act and to stimulate Americans to take up the fertile valleys. The ride would require five months in the dead of the winter, the drifted snow making the trails almost impassable. When his associates sought to deter him by stressing the grave hazards, he replied: "My life is of little worth if I can save this country to the American people." By a happy inspiration he decided to pass south between the two great mountain ranges by way of Fort Unitah (in northern Utah), to the southern gap and thence eastward by the Santa Fe Trail.

Deep snows, terrible cold, hostile Indians, and seemingly impassable rivers barred his way, but his indomitable spirit carried him through and on March 3, 1843, he arrived in Washington, President Tyler granted him an interview and his self-sacrificing heroism and eloquent facts won the day. The statesmen at Washington were convinced by his arguments, gave approval to a great migration of settlers and opened negotiations with Great Britain which resulted, on August 5, 1846, in the unfurling of the Stars and Stripes over the Oregon Country.

The summer of 1843 witnessed a vast migration of American settlers from the mid-west to the Oregon Country. Their safe and successful journey was largely due to the judgment and ability of Marcus Whitman, and in the fall one hundred wagons rolled into Walla Walla Valley bringing 1,000 settlers as reinforcements. The rapid increase of the white settlers and the misrepresentations of the French Canadian immigrants aroused the enmity of the Indians and culminated in a terrible massacre on November 29, 1847. Dr. and Mrs. Whitman, two adopted

children and ten immigrants were cruelly slain by some of the very Indians to whom the Whitmans had rendered especial service. The settlers eventually rescued the captives and executed the treacherous leaders. The Wai-i-lat-pu mission was broken up by the uprising, but ultimately Whitman College was reared on the mission property. Through the heroism of Marcus Whitman and his associates, the Oregon Country has become, increasingly, a Christian stronghold. Largely a result of his devotion, this rich northwest empire has been held for the Union and now for Christ. All honor the name of Marcus Whitman!

INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF MARCUS WHITMAN

Reprinted from "Winning the Oregon Country,"

by John T. Faris,

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Whitman Wins a Wife and Co-Workers. (P. 69-72.)

Narcissa Prentiss had promised Marcus Whitman that she would some day be his wife, but he hesitated to ask her to take the long journey to Oregon. He told her his reasons. The way was long and rough. There were no railroads, it was only six years since the building of the first railroad in the East. Where they were going they would have to use canoes or horses; many times they would have to walk. Indians would be all about them and Indians who had learned to dread the white man might prove dangerous neighbors.

Narcissa Prentiss laughed at the fears of her lover, and said she would go with him, of course.

But she would be lonely if there was not another woman in the party, so the marriage was postponed till Dr. Whitman could find a husband and wife willing to go with them. For a while his search was in vain. Then he heard of Dr. H. H. Spalding and his young bride, who were about to go as missionaries to the Osage Indians, on their reservation in Northern New York. He tried to reach the young people, but learned that they had already started for their new home. Whitman jumped into his sleigh and started after them. After a long pursuit he came up with them, during a blinding snow-storm. There was no time for a lengthy introduction, so he shouted:

"Ship ahoy! You are wanted for Oregon!"

The surprised travelers stopped.

Dr. Spalding called:

"What do you want?"

"It is too cold to explain here," Dr. Whitman answered. "Drive back with me to the inn at Howard, and I'll tell you the whole story."

Soon the three people were seated before the blazing fire in the inn. A hundred questions were asked and answered. The story of the Nez Percés' hunger for the gospel was told

and a brief account of the exploring trip made by Whitman and Parker the year before was given.

"I have promised to go back this spring," Whitman continued. "I am to be married as soon as I return home. Then we are to go out to Missouri where we are to join the fur traders till we are met by the Nez Percés, who will show us the way to our new home. We'll live on buffalo and venison, we'll travel on horseback, we'll spend the nights in tents or rolled in our blankets on the ground. Will you go with us?"

Mr. Spalding wanted to say yes, but he feared for his wife's health. She had recently recovered from a long sickness. So he said to her:

"It is not your duty to go; your health forbids. But it shall be left to you after we have prayed together."

After all had prayed, Mrs. Spalding went off by herself to decide the question of her duty. Ten minutes later she returned, her face shining, and said:

"I have made up my mind for Oregon."

Her husband asked her if she understood what her decision involved. He reminded her of the perils of the three thousand mile journey, and the loneliness of the far-away home. But she was firm. Her only answer was in the words used by Paul when friends tried to keep him back from Rome:

"What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die (on the Rocky Mountains) for the name of the Lord Jesus."

The Old Historic Wagon. (P. 75-78.)

The experienced plainsmen shook their heads when they saw the wagons, and said it would be impossible to take them across the mountains. But Dr. Whitman insisted that they must go. He was not thinking merely of the comfort of those who would use them, but more of the great importance of proving to the world that a wagon could be taken to Oregon. He was looking forward to the day when there would be in that country more white people than Indians, to be taught of God. Yet men and women would be prevented from making the journey by the statement that it was impossible to colonize Oregon by wagons. An English editor had said that American wagons could not go to the Columbia River, and Americans were believing him. It was Dr. Whitman's purpose to show the doubters that they were wrong. So he carried a wagon through with him to the Pacific slope, and thus he did what

has been called one of the most important things for the whole future of Oregon.

The traders shrugged their shoulders when "the silent Whitman" said the wagon must go along. They said, "I told you so," when one night, in a bit of rough country, he fell behind with his beloved wagon, and came into camp "late, warm, puffing, and cheery, too, for he had had only one upset."

The Indians were much interested in the first wheeled vehicle they had ever seen. "They put into jerky syllables the sounds it made as it rose and fell and stopped in the soft grass and among the rocks, and called it '*Chick-chick-shan-i-le-kai-kash.*'" Do not those syllables remind you of the creaking of a wagon?

Through canyons, along creek beds, up rocky precipices, the wagon was pushed and hauled. Many times it was overturned, but still the Doctor would not listen to those who urged him to abandon it. At last, when the way became too rough for four wheels, he made the wagon into a cart, added the extra wheels to the load, and pushed on. He was compelled to leave the cart at Fort Boise, and it probably remained there.

Dr. Whitman had triumphed, and those who said colonists could never go to the Oregon Country were effectively answered.

"The work was done, substantially. The wagon and the two brides, Mrs. Whitman and Mrs. Spalding, had won Oregon. The first wheels had marked the prairie and brushed the sage, and grazed the rocks, and cut the river banks all the way from the Missouri to the Columbia. How many ten thousands have since been on the trail with their long lines of white-topped canvas teams! The first white woman had crossed the continent, and not only witnessed but achieved the victory. . . . Oregon is already practically won. In going through, Whitman's wagon had demonstrated that women and children and household goods—the family—could be carried over the plains and mountains to Oregon."

A Notable Celebration of the Fourth of July. (P. 79-81.)

When, on July 4, 1836, the missionaries were at last over the crest of the Rockies, twenty-five hundred miles from home, they paused, spread their blankets, unfurled the American flag, and knelt in thankful prayer to dedicate to God the Oregon Country. With what astonishment the three Indian boys must have beheld the scene! The act meant more than the missionaries ever knew. One historian of Oregon says that it went far toward giving to the United States six thousand miles of Pacific coast.

After this notable Fourth of July celebration, the march was resumed. Word of the advance of the caravan had been taken by Indian scouts to a party of trappers and Indians who were encamped on the banks of the Green River. "This exhilarating news immediately inspired some of the trappers, foremost among whom was Meek, with a desire to be the first to meet and greet the oncoming caravan and especially to salute the two white women who were bold enough to invade a mountain camp. In a very short time Meek, with half-a-dozen comrades, and ten or a dozen Nez Percés, were mounted and away on their self-imposed errand of welcome; the trappers because they were 'spoiling' for a fresh excitement; and the Nez Percés because the missionaries were bringing them information concerning the powerful and beneficent Deity of the white men."

On the Fourth of July, "about two days' travel from camp, the caravan of the advancing company was discovered, and the trappers prepared to give them a characteristic greeting. To prevent mistakes in recognizing them, a white flag was hoisted on one of their guns, and the word was given to start. Then over the brow of a hill they made their appearance, riding with that mad speed only an Indian or a trapper can ride, yelling, whooping, darting forward with frantic and threatening gestures; their dress, noise, and motions all so completely savage that the white men could not have been distinguished from the red.

"The uninitiated travelers, believing they were about to be attacked by Indians, prepared for defense, nor could they be persuaded that the preparation was unnecessary, until the guide pointed out to them the white flag in advance. At the assurance that the flag betokened friends, every movement of the wild brigade became fascinating. On they came, riding faster and faster, yelling louder and louder, and gesticulating more and more madly, until, as they met and passed the caravan, they discharged their guns in one volley over the heads of the company; and suddenly wheeling rode back to the front as wildly as they had come. Nor could their first brief display content the crazy cavalcade. After reaching the front, they rode back and forth, and around and around the caravan, which had returned their salute, showing off their feats of horsemanship, and the knowing tricks of their horses together; hardly stopping to exchange questions and answers, but seeming really intoxicated with delight at the meeting. What strange emotions filled the breasts of the lady missionaries, when they beheld the Indians among whom their lot was to be cast, may now be faintly outlined by vivid imagination, but have never been, perhaps never could be, put into words!"

A Cheering Welcome. (P. 83-85.)

“When the trappers and Nez Percés had slaked their thirst for excitement by a few hours’ travel in company with the Fur Company’s and missionaries’ caravan, they gave at length a parting display of horsemanship, and dashed off on the return trail to carry to camp the earliest news. It was on their arrival in camp that the Nez Percés and Flathead village, which had its encampment at the rendezvous-ground on Green River, began to make preparations for the reception of the missionaries. It was then that Indian finery was displayed! Then the Indian women combed and braided their long black hair, tying the plaits with gay-colored ribbons, and the Indian braves tied anew their streaming scalp-locks, sticking them full of flaunting eagle’s plumes, and not despising a bit of ribbon, either. Paint was in demand both for the rider and his horse. Gay blankets, red and blue, buckskin fringed shirts, worked with beads and porcupine quills, and handsomely embroidered moccasins, were eagerly sought after. Guns were cleaned and burnished, and drums and fifes were put in tune.

“After a day of toilsome preparation all was ready for the grand reception in the camp of the Nez Percés. Word was at length given that the caravan was in sight. There was a rush for horses, and in a few moments the Indians were mounted and in line, ready to charge on the advancing caravan. When the command of the chiefs was given to start, a simultaneous chorus of yells and whoops burst forth, accompanied by the deafening din of the war-drums, the discharge of firearms, and the clatter of the whole cavalcade, which was at once in a mad gallop toward the oncoming train. Nor did the yelling, whooping, drumming, and firing cease until within a few yards of the train.”

Then came the formal greeting of the missionaries. They were welcomed to the best in the camp. Mrs. Whitman and Mrs. Spalding soon won all hearts.

The Indians were not alone in their joy. Hardy frontiersmen, who had not seen a white woman for years, looked reverently on the faces of the two brides. Years later one of them said, “From that day when I took again the hand of a civilized woman, I was a better man.” And a trapper said, “There is something the royal Hudson Bay Company and its masters can’t drive out of Oregon.” He knew the coming of the two women meant the dawn of civilization.

Choosing Fields of Labor. (P. 85-87.)

The Nez Percés were loath to see their new friends go on to the Pacific, but Marcus Whitman thought it best to have a talk with Dr. McLoughlin at Fort Vancouver. One old chief, when he saw that they were determined to go, decided to go with them, though his absence from home just at this time meant his doing without his winter's supply of buffalo meat.

Pausing only at Fort Walla Walla where Mrs. Whitman rejoiced in a meal of fresh salmon, potatoes, tea, bread, and butter, and in the sound of a rooster's crow, the missionaries pushed on to Vancouver, arriving there September 12, 1836, almost two years after the coming of Jason Lee.

The great-hearted Dr. McLoughlin welcomed these travelers as he had welcomed their predecessors, persuaded the women to remain at the fort while their husbands went back to find locations and build houses, and freely offered to help the men in any way he could.

In a few days Dr. Whitman fixed his eyes on a place for his mission on the banks of the Walla Walla, among the Cayuse. He called the mission Wai-i-lat-pu, the Indian name for the spot. Dr. Spalding and Mr. Gray went one hundred and twenty-five miles farther east to Lapwai Creek, near the site of what is now Lewiston, Idaho. There, among the Nez Percés, ground was marked off for a mission.

For three weeks the men lived in a buffalo skin tent; then they moved into a log house, forty-eight by eighteen feet, which the eager Indians had helped them to build. The logs had to be carried from the river, three miles away, and it took twelve Indians to carry one log. But there was no lack of workers. One third of the new house was set aside for living quarters; the rest was to be schoolroom, Indian boarding-house, and church.

Thus the appeal of the chiefs at St. Louis had led to the opening of three stations; Jason Lee was on the Willamette, Whitman was at Wai-i-lat-pu on the Walla Walla, and Spalding was at Lapwai on the Clearwater.

Laying Foundations. (P. 112-114, 116.)

For six weeks the five men had toiled before they had built a house of one large room whose open fireplace was ready to glow with welcoming heat for the visitor, or, first of all, for the wife, without whom the house would never be anything more than a house. But when Mrs. Whitman entered the door, the house became a home.

How good the first breakfast prepared in that place by a woman's hands must have tasted, when next morning the men gathered about the rude table! With what joy, before the meal was begun, heads were bowed in reverent acknowledgment of God's goodness!

After the dishes had been cleared away Mrs. Whitman began to look about her, at the furnishings of her home. There were "chairs rudely made with skins stretched across them; table made of four posts covered with boards sawed by hand; stools made of logs sawed of proper length; pegs along the walls upon which to hang the clothing, nails being too expensive a luxury; beds fastened to the walls, and filled with dried grass and leaves."

Then she went to the door and looked out over the grounds about the cabin, and the river whose waters glistened in the morning sunlight. Her eyes filled with the happy tears of gratitude which found expression at once, as she took up the journal which had been her companion on the journey from New York, and wrote:

"We reached our new home December 10th, found a house reared, and the lean-to inclosed, a good chimney and fireplace, and the floor laid, but no windows or doors, except blankets. My heart truly leaped for joy as I alighted from my horse, entered, and seated myself before a pleasant fire, for it was night, and the air chilly.

"It is a lovely situation. We are on the level peninsula formed by the two branches of the Walla Walla River. Our house stands on the southeast shore of the main river. To run a fence across, from river to river, will inclose three hundred acres of good land, and all under the eye. Just east of the house rises a range of low hills, covered with bunch-grass almost as rich as oats for the stock. The Indians have named the place 'Wai-i-lat-pu,' the place of the rye grass."

The missionaries were not satisfied to tell in their journals of their gratitude to God. Morning and evening—beginning on that first day in the new home—it was their habit to gather about the family altar. Mrs. Whitman's melodious voice was a great help in these family services. There were soon many unexpected listeners to her singing; the Cayuse would steal up to the cabin in their effort to catch every sound. They could not understand the words, but they could read the face of the "white squaw," and they loved her at once. . . .

Whitman set the example of industry, by building fences, plowing the virgin soil, building a house, a school, and a stable, planting an orchard, and doing the thousand and one other things that only a farmer can name. The Indians watched him

intently. A few of them consented to follow his example. He agreed to furnish seed to each man who would sow it, and he offered to show him how to prepare the land, care for the growing crops, and gather the harvest. Within a few years a score or more of the Indians were cultivating from one fourth of an acre to four acres of land, some had as many as seventy head of cattle, and some of them owned a few sheep. As one result, the winter population about the station, which had at first been very small, was nearly as large as the summer population.

Whitman Hears the Call of Duty. (P. 174-176.)

The devoted Whitman was vitally interested in the future of the country. He had come out from the East as a missionary to the Indians, and he was doing his best to give the gospel to the red men. But he knew that white men would come who would know how to make better use than the Indians of the fertile valleys and the mountains rich in ore. As the Indians gave way to their successors, he would have to change his method of work and preach and teach the settlers. Was it not proper to look forward to this time and by every means in his power prepare to accomplish his task? And how could his task be accomplished unless the United States should be in control of the country?

He recalled his talk with the missionaries who felt just as he did. In his mind he went back to those spring days in 1838 when he had gone over the whole ground with Jason Lee, who was then on his way to Washington to urge Congress to take action making Oregon American territory. Jason Lee had returned with the word that Congress did not seem ready to act, but hopeful that it would do so before it was too late. He had inspired others with the same hope, and their hope seemed to be well grounded because of the company of fifty-one whom Lee had piloted back with him. The knowledge that of the one hundred and fifty white people in Oregon the Americans had a large majority had caused them to feel secure. And when, in 1842, one hundred and twenty-five more Americans came in, it seemed that the land was won.

But Whitman had heard of the coming of one hundred and fifty British subjects. He could not permit himself to rest longer in fancied security. It was the time to act, and to act decisively. Congress must grasp Oregon and hold it.

How could Congress be persuaded to take action? Who could write a letter that would inspire with the vision of the coming West the men who lived in the East? And how could

the letter be taken to Washington in time? Some one should go to Washington at once. Who would go?

The questions were unanswerable—till Marcus Whitman answered them by saying decisively:

“I will go!”

He consulted his wife. She said, “Go!”

He talked to his associates. They, too, after some hesitation, said “Go!” He talked to General Lovejoy, who had come out with the last party of American immigrants, and he said, “Go, and I will go with you!”

Starting on the Historic Ride. (P. 176-178.)

The travelers set out on October 3, 1842, taking with them a number of Indians who were to guide them by a new route over the mountains.

As Dr. Marcus Whitman mounted his mule, ready to begin his long ride of nearly four thousand miles, he said:

“My life is of little worth if I can save this country to the American people.”

Those who heard wondered if Whitman would indeed pay for his trip with his life. It was already late in the autumn. He would have to travel over the mountains in the depth of winter. They had tried to persuade him to wait till spring, but his answer had been that he could not wait, for it was only five months till Congress would adjourn. He knew the grave danger of the winter journey, but he would not delay because of danger. If it was in man's power to push through to Washington, he would succeed.

In eleven days Whitman was at Fort Hall, six hundred and forty-five miles on his way. There he met Captain Grant, a man who, six years before, had done his best to persuade him to leave his wagon by the roadside. Once again attempt was made to discourage him. He was told that the trip he proposed was foolhardy in the winter season. Snow was already twenty feet deep in the mountains, and no one knew how much deeper it might be. Streams would be raging torrents. How could he hope to survive these perils?

But Marcus Whitman only smiled, and pressed on. The Indian guides returned and other guides were secured who agreed to lead the way south to New Mexico. The new route would be much longer, but the region of snow would be sooner crossed. He was the first white man to take that route, and a new way was always perilous. But he must be in Washington before March 4, when Congress would adjourn.

Crossing the Rio Grande. (P. 179-180.)

After seven days Whitman returned with the new guide, and the journey was resumed, only to be interrupted again by the Rio Grande, six hundred feet wide, but frozen only two two hundred feet or so from either bank. Even in the summer season this is one of the most treacherous rivers in the West. The guide said the open stretch of water could not be crossed, but Whitman rode his horse into the icy flood. Mr. Lovejoy wrote in his journal:

“Away they went completely under water, horse and all, but directly came up, and after buffeting the waves and foaming current, he made for the ice on the opposite side, a long way down the stream, leaped upon the ice and soon had his noble animal by his side. The guide and I forced in the pack-mule and followed the Doctor’s example, and were soon drying our frozen clothes by a comfortable fire.” This was the most trying experience of the journey. But there were more storms, and more rivers to cross. It was one of the severest winters known. If the northern route had been taken it is doubtful if Whitman would ever have reached the Mississippi. As it was, feet and hands and ears were frozen. Again and again it seemed that the men must camp and wait for better weather. But each time Dr. Whitman argued, “I must be in Washington before March 4.”

Marcus Whitman at Washington. (P. 182-183.)

In St. Louis, Whitman learned that a month after he left Oregon, the Senate had confirmed a treaty with England which arranged about a bit of the northeastern portion of the boundary line between Canada and the United States, but said nothing about Oregon. Then he was not too late! With grateful heart he hurried on. Mr. Lovejoy had been left far behind, completely exhausted, but Whitman could not rest, for he must reach Washington before March 4!

His determination enabled him to force his way through many obstacles, and he did finally reach Washington—on March 3, 1843!

With the directness of a man who knew just what he wanted, Whitman pleaded the cause of Oregon. He urged that at the very first opportunity an end be put to the period of joint occupation with Great Britain, and that the laws of the United States be put in force in the territory. He spoke of his regret that Oregon had not been mentioned in the treaty recently ratified,

but he said he hoped this error would be corrected at an early date. He told of the smiling, fertile land that was waiting for the settler, of his hope that settlers would come from America, and of his feeling that none would come till there was a stable government.

Before his return to Oregon he put in writing the substance of his arguments, outlined a plan for a territorial government under the United States, and told in detail of a practical route for immigrant trains across the plains and the mountains. The documents were forwarded to Washington.

Leading New Settlers to Oregon. (P. 183-184.)

At once Whitman began a campaign to induce immigrants to return with him to Oregon in that very year. He was so successful that a large company was gathered. The plans for the start were made by Whitman, and he was the ever-present helper of the travelers. Dr. Spalding says of Whitman's activity on the trip westward:

“He was the ministering angel to the sick, helping the weary, encouraging the wavering, cheering the tired mothers, setting broken bones, and mending wagons. He was in the front, in the center, and in the rear. He was in the rivers hunting out fords through the quicksand, in the desert places looking for water and grass, among the mountains hunting for passes never before trodden by white men. At noontide and at midnight he was on the alert as if the whole line was his own family, and as if all the flocks and herds were his own. For all this he never asked nor expected a dollar from any source, and especially did he feel repaid at the end, when, standing at his mission home, hundreds of his fellow pilgrims took him by the hand and thanked him with tears in their eyes for all he had done.”

At Fort Hall, Captain Grant, the servant of the Hudson Bay Company, tried to discourage the settlers from taking their wagons and farm tools with them. He pointed to a yard full of wagons and tools which other settlers had left behind. The immigrants were ready to do as he asked, till Whitman promised to help them through the mountains, wagons and all!

Crossing the Snake River. (P. 184-186.)

How he succeeded in the task he set himself may be judged from a single incident of the way, after Fort Hall had been left behind:

“When the immigrants reached the Snake River, Dr. Whitman proceeded to fasten wagons together in one long string,

the strongest in the lead. As soon as the teams were in position, he tied a rope around his waist and, starting his horse into the current, swam over. He called to others to follow him, and when they had force enough to pull at the rope, the lead team was started in, and all were drawn over in safety; as soon as the leading teams were able to get foothold on the bottom, all was safe, as they, guided by the strong arms of the men pulling at the rope, pulled the weaker ones along."

From the Snake River the caravan—one hundred and twenty-five wagons, one thousand head of cattle, sheep, and horses, and about one thousand men, women, and children went northwest, through the Blue Mountains and Grand Ronde and on to Wai-i-lat-pu.

And Oregon was won for the United States, won by a peaceful invasion. The immigrants, delighted by their new home, wrote home telling of the wonderful country. They wrote to congressmen and senators, urging the United States to make Oregon a part of the country. Everywhere there was discussion of the question: "Do we want Oregon?" And at last Congress, bowing to public sentiment, concluded a treaty with Great Britain for the possession of the land already occupied.

Thus, on August 5, 1846, it came to pass that the Oregon Country—including the present States of Washington, Oregon, Idaho and parts of Montana and Wyoming, more than thirty-four times as much territory as all of Massachusetts—found its way under the American flag!

The Massacre by the Cayuse Indians. (P. 196-199.)

The blow fell on Monday morning, November 29, 1847. Marcus Whitman had been out to camp helping to bury an Indian. When he returned to the house he thought nothing of the presence there of several Indians. One of the men attracted his attention by asking for medicine. "Another came behind him with tomahawk concealed under his blanket and with two blows in the back of the head, brought him to the floor senseless, probably, but not lifeless; soon after, Ti-lau-kait, a candidate for admission in our Church came in and beat and cut Dr. Whitman's face and cut his throat; but he still lingered till near night.

"As soon as the firing commenced at the different places, Mrs. Hayes ran in and assisted Mrs. Whitman in taking the Doctor from the kitchen to the sitting-room and placed him upon the settee. This was before his face was cut. His wife

bent over him and mingled her tears with his blood. It was all she could do.

“John Sager, who was sitting by the Doctor when he received the first blow, drew his pistol, but his arm was seized, the room filling with Indians, and his head was cut to pieces. He lingered till near night. Mr. Rogers, attacked at the water, escaped with a broken arm and wound in the head, and rushing into the house, shut the door. The Indians seemed to have left the house now to assist in murdering others. Mr. Kimball, with a broken arm, rushed in; both secreted themselves upstairs.

“Mrs. Whitman in anguish, now bending over her dying husband and now over the sick, now comforting the flying, screaming children, was passing by the window, when she received the first shot in her right breast, and fell to the floor. She immediately arose and kneeled by the settee on which her bleeding husband lay, and commended her soul to God, and prayed for her children who were about to be made a second time orphans.

“In the meantime the doors and windows were broken in and the Indians entered and commenced plundering, but they feared to go into the chamber. They called for Mrs. Whitman and Mr. Rogers to come down and promised they should not be hurt. This promise was often repeated, and they came down. Mrs. Whitman, faint with the loss of blood, was carried on a settee to the door.”

A few moments later Mrs. Whitman was killed as she lay on the settee, pierced by many bullets. Then she was scalped by an Indian named Tam-suk-y. Mr. Rogers was shot at the same time. The children who crowded into the corners were saved from death by the appeal of an Indian more humane than the rest who cried, “Do not shoot the children.”

This was only the beginning. The Cayuse, assisted by the Walla Wallas, rushed to the houses of the settlers and killed a number of them. In all fourteen were slain, nine the first day, but the fate of those who died then was more fortunate than that of many of the party, women and children carried away captive by the murderers. A number of the captives died. The others were ransomed after two awful weeks, through the authority and generosity of the Hudson Bay Company.

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